NOVA SCOTIA
Senior Citizens' Secretariat

Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat

Business Plan

2005-2006

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Message from the Minister and Executive Director 3

B. Structure 4

C. Mandate 4

D. Vision 4

E. Strategic Goals 4

F. Core Business Areas and Priorities –Summary 5

G. Planning Context 6

H. Core Business Areas and Priorities 8

Core Business 1 - Intra -Government and Interdepartmental Collaboration 8

Core Business 2 - Policy Development and Consultation 8

Core Business 3 - Planning and Coordinating Programs 10
and Services for Seniors

Core Business 4 - Information and Education 12

I. Budget Context 13

J. Performance Measures 15

A. MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is with pleasure that we present the 2005-2006 Business Plan for the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat. With its unique focus on seniors, the Secretariat reinforces the Government of Nova Scotia's commitment to promoting the value and participation of seniors in communities throughout our province.

Providing leadership for the Government's Task Force on Aging initiative was the Secretariat's greatest single priority in 2004-2005 – a priority that will continue throughout fiscal 2005-2006. The Task Force on Aging is the process being used to develop the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*, which will guide government decision making and influence societal actions over the next decade and beyond. Having a strategy will ensure Nova Scotia is better equipped to meet the challenges and capitalize on the advantages of an aging population.

In 2004-2005, the Secretariat conducted 34 public meetings attended by more than 700 people, held 11 stakeholder forums involving more than 100 individuals and organization representatives, and received more than 100 written responses to its *Discussion Paper for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*. This information will inform the development of the final *Strategy for Positive Aging*, which will be released in 2005. Work is already underway on Phase II of the Task Force on Aging, which will see an Interdepartmental Committee prepare the detailed action plan required to guide the implementation of the Strategy.

The Secretariat is also leading the implementation of the Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy. In 2005-2006, more than 30 concerned government and community stakeholders will continue to assist the Secretariat in its work which will focus on raising awareness about elder abuse and preventing financial abuse—thought to be the most common type of abuse among seniors.

Other priorities for 2005-2006 will see the Secretariat partnering with the Office of Health Promotion to encourage healthy active living among seniors, and developing a model to facilitate community-based peer support and volunteer networks for seniors.

Most importantly, the Secretariat has been successful in building a strong model of partnership with seniors in Nova Scotia and looks forward to continuing this important work in 2005-2006. Throughout the year the Secretariat consults and collaborates with seniors and seniors' organizations on issues that matter to our aging population. Their contributions are invaluable.

These and many other investments clearly demonstrate the government's ongoing commitment to seniors, now and in the future.

Honourable Angus MacIsaac
Chairperson

Valerie White
Executive Director

B. STRUCTURE

The Nova Scotia Seniors Citizens' Secretariat consists of the Minister of Health, Minister of Community Services, Minister of Education, Minister of Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations, and Minister of Health Promotion. The Minister of Health serves as the Chairperson of the Secretariat and is Nova Scotia's Minister Responsible for Seniors. The Secretariat is staffed by an Executive Director and six permanent staff.

C. MANDATE

The Secretariat facilitates the planning, development, and coordination of policies, programs, and services for seniors in partnership with government departments, seniors, and voluntary seniors groups. It also serves as a single entry point to Government — providing information on programs and services for seniors and responding to seniors' issues and concerns.

D. VISION

Nova Scotia, a society for all ages, promotes the well-being and contributions of older people in all aspects of life (Modeled after the vision for the National Framework on Aging).

E. STRATEGIC GOALS

The Secretariat's strategic goals support the government's corporate priorities for 2005-2006, particularly its commitment to protect what Nova Scotians value – seniors and families in need.

6. **Provide leadership in the planning, development, and integration of policies and programs for seniors.**
   The Secretariat plays an important role in championing and coordinating the efforts of provincial government departments to meet the current and future needs of Nova Scotia's aging population. It also encourages other sectors of society to help prepare for an aging population, including individuals, communities, voluntary sector, business, labour, and all levels of government.

7. **Seek the input and views of older Nova Scotians to assist in public policy development and ensure seniors have a strong voice in planning their future.**
   The Secretariat uses a variety of methods to consult with seniors and ensure their views are considered by government in the development of policies, programs, and services.

8. **Inform and educate on aging issues, programs and services for seniors, and the contributions of seniors to family and community life.**
   The Secretariat provides information to seniors, their families, and service providers through a variety of methods including telephone access, publications, and a website. It also encourages a greater understanding of seniors by promoting their skills, abilities, and contributions and supporting their right to remain active and develop to their full potential.

F. CORE BUSINESS AREAS

The Secretariat's core business areas and priorities contribute to the attainment of the Government's corporate priorities for 2005-2006 and the Secretariat's strategic goals.

Core Business 1 **Intra-Government and Interdepartmental Collaboration**

Priority 1.1. Participate in the Work of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors

Core Business 2 **Policy Development and Consultation**

Priority 2.1 Finalize and Initiate Implementation of the Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia

Priority 2.2 Facilitate Partnerships with Seniors and Seniors' Organizations

Priority 2.3 Engage in Regular Consultations with Seniors and Seniors'Organizations

Priority 2.4 Host the Canadian Association of Gerontology Conference

Core Business 3 **Planning and Coordinating Programs and Services for Seniors**

Priority 3.1 Strengthen Community-based Peer Support and Volunteer Networks for Seniors

Priority 3.2 Encourage Healthy Living

Priority 3.3 Implement the Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy

Priority 3.4 Oversee Phase 4 of the Nova Scotia Seniors Literacy Project

Core Business 4 **Information and Education**

Priority 4.1 Operate the Seniors' Information Line

Priority 4.2 Provide Information and Educational Resource Materials to Seniors

Priority 4.3 Operate the Information Resource Centre

Priority 4.4 Strengthen Communications

G. PLANNING CONTEXT

Opportunities and Challenges
In the coming decades, the aging of our communities will create unprecedented economic, social, and political challenges and opportunities.

Seniors range in age from 65 to over 100 years – spanning more than two generations. Today's seniors differ in their work and cultural experiences, skills, abilities, and education. They also have varying levels of health, vulnerability, and financial independence.

Seniors are a diverse group with varying expectations and living arrangements. The vast majority live independently at home while some live at home with supports. A small percentage require assisted living or long-term care.

The average income of seniors is lower than for most other age groups. In 2000, the average household income for the 74,700 senior households in Nova Scotia was $31,100. Incomes among seniors were 35% lower than the 50-64 age group, and 45% below the under 50 group. Seniors derived about half of their income from Old Age Security (OAS) and Canada Pension Plan (CPP), a third from private pensions, and the remainder from investments and employment.

Despite income security programs, 6% or 7,000 seniors were living below Statistic Canada's low-income cut-off (LICO) in 1999. The vast majority (85%) of seniors living in economic hardship were women living by themselves. Unlike younger generations, seniors have relatively fixed incomes due to their limited ability to increase their income through employment or education.

Seniors' expenses are variable. Although certain costs, such as mortgage payments, are lower for some seniors than for other population groups, many seniors face cost increases in other areas, especially if they become frail as they age (e.g., home maintenance, personal care, transportation, medications, mobility aids, long-term care costs). Unexpected expenses, such as increased utility costs, major house repairs, and reductions in government benefits are also challenging, particularly for low-income seniors.

Nova Scotia's population is already the oldest in Atlantic Canada and the third oldest in Canada. Each month, nearly 700 Nova Scotians turn 65. With seniors now numbering approximately 132,600 and expected to nearly double by 2026, it goes without saying that Nova Scotia is undergoing a demographic shift that will have a far-reaching effect on every facet of society.

Seniors are the fastest growing population group in Nova Scotia and Canada. The rapid aging of Nova Scotia's population is already evident in many communities. One in five residents (19.5 %) of Nova Scotia's 31 towns is 65 or older. In fact, more than one-quarter of the residents of Mahone Bay, Lunenburg, Lockport, Digby, Annapolis Royal, and Berwick are seniors.

Seniors contribute enormously to their families, often through direct financial contributions in the form of substantial loans and gifts and in important and valuable in-kind services, such as childcare. They contribute immensely to the quality of life in Nova Scotia communities and the economy. Seniors are a powerful consumer force, they contribute a large share of government revenues, and are more generous with charitable contributions than any other segment of the population.

Planning for Tomorrow's Seniors Population

The Government of Nova Scotia has made seniors a priority. Through Nova Scotia's Task Force on Aging, the government has taken on the challenge of looking beyond today's seniors and considering how Nova Scotia will prepare its programs, services, and infrastructure for the seniors of tomorrow, especially those Nova Scotians who make up the "baby boom" generation. The "baby boomers" are those people currently in their 40s and 50s who may be different in important ways from current seniors, in terms of their education, income, expectations, and health status.

The Secretariat is the lead agency for the Task Force on Aging, having completed Phase I of this initiative in 2004-2005. The main outcome of Phase I is the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*, which provides a framework for the development of all provincial policies and programs affecting seniors now and in the future. The strategy identifies a vision, positive aging goals, and key actions that must be taken by various sectors of society to meet the needs of seniors and provide them with a positive aging experience.

Phase II of the Task Force on Aging, which is already underway, includes the establishment of a government-wide, interdepartmental working group. The working group will develop the detailed action plan needed to guide the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging* and ensure all relevant government departments make the implementation of the Strategy a priority.

This year, the Secretariat will begin to monitor the implementation of the Strategy. Reporting will be in the form of a brief annual update and a more comprehensive review every three years. It will also update the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* and its action plan to ensure both documents reflect progress made and changes in the planning environment.

Meeting the Challenge

Leading the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* will enhance the Secretariat's visibility and profile within government, and among seniors, stakeholders, and the general public. The Strategy is an important means by which the Secretariat can fulfill its mandate to facilitate the planning, development, and coordination of policies, programs, and services for seniors across government.

In addition to the Secretariat's considerable responsibilities for the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*, there are increasing demands being placed on staff from seniors and seniors' organizations seeking information about available programs and services, as well as from partners and stakeholders arising from increased activity in the field of aging.

To address the challenges the Secretariat is facing in terms of its changing and increasing workload this year, the Secretariat is redesigning its office space to accommodate staffing changes and reviewing and updating the responsibilities of its employees to better address its current needs.

H. CORE BUSINESS AREAS AND PRIORITIES

Core Business 1 Intra-Government and Interdepartmental Collaboration

Promotes collaboration across government and between levels of government in identifying and addressing the needs of seniors. Programs and activities include:

- Advising Secretariat Ministers of the concerns and priorities of seniors and formulating strategies to address the challenges and opportunities presented.
- Supporting the work of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors and Committee of Officials.
- Convening meetings of the Ministers of the Secretariat and preparing support materials.
- Maintaining the national Seniors Programs and Services Database (SPPD), in support of the F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors.
- Organizing meetings among ministers, government officials, and seniors.

Priority 1.1 Facilitate Nova Scotia's Participation in the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum

For the purpose of advising Secretariat Ministers of the concerns and priorities of seniors and formulating strategies to address the challenges and opportunities of an aging society, the Secretariat will:

- Prepare Nova Scotia's Minister Responsible for Seniors to participate in discussions on planning for Canada's aging population at the Eighth Meeting of F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors, planned for Quebec City, May 24-27, 2005.
- Prepare a briefing book for Nova Scotia's Minister Responsible for Seniors in advance of the meeting in Quebec.
- Participate on the F/P/T Committee of Officials and in the preparatory work for the meeting of Ministers.

Core Business 2 Policy Development and Consultation

Promotes quality and evidence-based decisions in the development of aging-related plans and policies through collaboration with government departments, academics, and community groups. Programs and activities include:

- Leading Phase II of Nova Scotia's Task Force on Aging and guiding the implementation of the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia*, which provides a framework for the development of all provincial policies and programs affecting seniors now and in the future.
- Maintaining a current and relevant *Statistical Profile of Older Nova Scotians* to inform public and policy audiences about the seniors population.
- Partnering with academia, community-based organizations, and other departments and levels

of government on aging-related research.

- Facilitating partnerships with seniors and seniors' organizations by leading, sponsoring, and promoting the participation of seniors on various standing committees of the Secretariat such as its Medication Awareness Committee, Seniors' Safe Driving Committee, Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy Committee and its associated Financial Abuse Prevention and Education and Awareness working groups.
- Representing the interests of seniors on standing committees convened by other government departments, academia, and community-based organizations.
- Engaging in regular public policy consultations and information sharing sessions with seniors and seniors' organizations through various means such as regular meetings with the Group of IX Seniors' Organizations, the Secretariat's Spring and Fall consultations with seniors' organizations, and special task forces such as the Task Force on Aging.

Priority 2.1 Distribute the *Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia* and Guide its Implementation

A priority for the Secretariat this year is to oversee Phase II of the Task Force on Aging, which will see the Strategy rolled-out across government and integrated into current and future government-wide business planning processes. This is a multi-year initiative. The following milestones will be achieved by March 31st, 2006:

- Finalize the Strategy for Positive Aging including its writing, design, layout, printing, and distribution.
- Identify and advance priority items in the strategy for government action.
- Communicate the findings/priorities of the Strategy to all sectors of society to encourage their support and immediate action.
- Establish, coordinate, and support the work of the Strategy's Interdepartmental Committee responsible for developing the Detailed Action Plan to guide the government's work in implementing the Strategy.
- Finalize the Detailed Action Plan for submission to Cabinet, including its writing, design, layout, printing, and distribution.
- Use a variety of communication strategies to keep stakeholders and the public up-to-date on the Strategy.
- Develop the template for reporting the Strategy's progress (Annual Report, Comprehensive three-year Update).

Priority 2.2 Facilitate Partnerships with Seniors and Seniors' Organizations

To provide seniors and seniors organizations with opportunities to help identify solutions to specific issues, seniors will be encouraged to serve on various standing and project steering committees of the Secretariat including Medication Awareness, Seniors' Safe Driving, Seniors Literacy, and Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy Committees. These are on-going initiatives.

Priority 2.3 Engage in Regular Consultations with Seniors and Seniors' Organizations
To facilitate the involvement of seniors in public policy consultation and information sharing, regular forums will be held such as meetings with the Group of IX Seniors Organizations, the Secretariat's Spring and Fall consultations with seniors' organizations, and other special task forces. These are on-going initiatives.

Priority 2.4 Host the Canadian Association on Gerontology National Conference (CAG)
To establish Nova Scotia as a national leader in the field of aging, the Secretariat will host the national CAG conference, *Navigating Aging – Adjusting the Sails to Meet the Winds of Change*, in Halifax, Oct. 20-23, 2005. CAG is a national, multi-disciplinary association that seeks to improve the lives of older Canadians through the creation and dissemination of knowledge in gerontological policy, research, practice, and education. Hosting the conference in Nova Scotia will enable more practitioners and students from Nova Scotia to attend. Valerie White, Executive Director of the Secretariat, is Chair of the Conference Planning Committee. Secretariat staff will provide support to the committee on an as-needed basis.

Core Business 3 Planning and Coordinating Programs and Services for Seniors

Promotes the active involvement of seniors in society and builds partnerships with government, business, and voluntary organizations in identifying and addressing the needs of seniors. Programs and activities include:

- Supporting community-based seniors' organizations and enabling them to remain engaged in the community.
- Recognizing and supporting seniors' participation by including seniors on the Secretariat's standing committees and involving them in organizing activities such as the 50+ Expo, Seniors Art and Photo Gallery, and 55+ Seniors' Games.
- Partnering with the Office of Health Promotion to promote healthy living for seniors and to develop community-based, peer-support, and volunteer seniors' networks.
- Overseeing the implementation of the Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy.
- Administering the Seniors' Literacy Project and facilitating the development of life-long learning programs for seniors.
- Partnering with the Office of Health Promotion to develop and implement a strategy to prevent falls among seniors, as part of the Office of Health Promotion's Injury Prevention Strategy.
- Partnering with various stakeholders to determine the dental health needs of seniors and recommend ways to meet those needs.

Priority 3.1 Strengthen Community-based, Peer Support, Volunteer Networks for Seniors
To enable seniors, particularly new retirees, to continue using the skills, expertise, and experience they have developed over the years, community-based, peer support, volunteer networks for seniors will be strengthened. This is a multi-year initiative. The following milestones will be achieved by March 31st, 2006:

- Maintain partnerships with organizations having similar priorities.
- Participate/partner in a volunteerism forum in Spring 2005.
- Develop a model to facilitate community-based peer support and volunteer networks for

seniors.
- Pilot a peer advocacy support program.
- Collaborate with Federal/Provincial/Territorial committees to enhance their efforts to promote, enhance, and support volunteerism.

Priority 3.2 Encourage Healthy Active Living for Seniors

To support seniors in their efforts to be active and encourage the development of new community-based approaches to healthy active living for seniors, the Secretariat will continue to partner with the Office of Health Promotion. Actions identified this year build on last year's accomplishments and arise from recommendations made at the Healthy Active Living for Seniors stakeholder's meeting, held in Sept. 2004. The first Nova Scotia 55 + Games, planned for Cornwallis Park, in the Annapolis Valley from September 28 - October 1, 2005, will be this year's highlight. Encouraging healthy active living for seniors is a multi-year initiative. The following milestones will be achieved by March 31st, 2006:

- Encourage a variety of approaches to addressing the diverse needs of the seniors population in pursuing healthy active lives.
- Publicize the availability of the *Healthy Active Living for Seniors* paper and post on website.
- Establish a resource clearing house or inventory to identify current programs and services for seniors, best practices, and supports available to help seniors lead active, healthy lives.
- Promote the use of the inventory to seniors, seniors' organizations, and program/service deliverers.
- Determine the best approaches for raising awareness among seniors about the importance of healthy lifestyles. Take steps to implement these social marketing and communications approaches.
- Collaborate with other initiatives that share the goal of promoting healthy active living for seniors, such as the falls prevention and osteoporosis prevention initiatives.
- Support the Nova Scotia 55+ Games Society in hosting the Nova Scotia 55 + Games.

Priority 3.3 Implement the Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy

The Secretariat, with assistance from its Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy Committee, is entering into year two of implementing the Elder Abuse Prevention Strategic Plan and its many recommendations. This is a five-year implementation strategy and multi-year initiative. The following milestones will be achieved by March 31st, 2006:

- Coordinate the work of the Financial Abuse Prevention Working Group and its efforts to prevent the financial abuse of seniors.
- Coordinate the work of the Education/Awareness Working Group and its efforts to increase public awareness and educate various stakeholders about elder abuse.
- Liaise with stakeholder groups at the provincial and local level.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing local community networks as a strategy for addressing and preventing elder abuse.
- Seek partners to undertake specific initiatives.

Priority 3.4 Oversee Phase 4 of the Nova Scotia Seniors Literacy Project

Given the success of the seniors' literacy workshops offered in Phase 3, the Secretariat, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Education and participating Community Learning Networks, will provide new opportunities for seniors to participate in senior-friendly literacy programs. The programs will use the Seniors' Literacy Resource Kit developed in Phase 2 of the project as the basis for its programming. The following milestones will be achieved by March 31, 2006.

- Sponsor senior-friendly literacy programs in interested communities throughout Nova Scotia.
- Liaise with seniors and stakeholder groups at the provincial and local levels to promote seniors' literacy programs.
- Evaluate Phase 4 and make recommendations for future programming.

Priority 3.5 Support the Work of the Seniors Oral Health Collaboration

The Secretariat is represented on the Seniors Oral Health Collaboration, a group of 14 key stakeholders and their organizations from across Nova Scotia. The Collaboration is committed to facilitating sustainable oral health for Nova Scotia seniors. Funding for the collaboration to further its work during the next 12 - 18 months was recently received. Additionally, the Secretariat will provide in-kind supports, such as office space and equipment, to the Collaboration.

Core Business 4 Information and Education

Enhances the Secretariat's strategic goal to inform and educate on aging issues, programs and services for seniors, and the contributions of seniors to family and community life. Major programs and activities include:

- Providing telephone-based information and referral to seniors and their families via the Seniors' Information Line.
- Preparing and distributing publications including the *Programs for Seniors* directory, *Senior Citizens' Secretariat Quarterly Newsletter, Secretariat Brochure, Directory of Seniors' Councils, Clubs, Centres, and Organizations, Statistical Profile of Nova Scotia Seniors, and Seniors' Housing Directory.*
- Developing and maintaining the Secretariat's website.
- Operating the Secretariat's Information Resource Centre and lending and distributing resource materials.
- Obtaining and distributing information and resource materials to seniors through various venues.
- Overseeing educational campaigns including the *Knowledge is the Best Medicine* campaign.
- Overseeing media relations.
- Delivering presentations and providing information at seniors' events and meetings throughout the province.

Priority 4.1 Operate the Seniors' Information Line

To ensure questions and concerns from seniors and their families are addressed, the Seniors Information Line is accessible free of charge, from anywhere in the province, during regular working hours. After-hours calls are returned the next business day. This is an on-going initiative.

Priority 4.2 Provide Information and Educational Resource Materials to Seniors
To contribute to the knowledge and understanding seniors have about the programs and services available to them, the Secretariat's information directories and website will be updated regularly. This is an ongoing initiative. The following milestones will be achieved by March 31st, 2006:

- Update and distribute *Programs for Seniors* and *Directory of Senior Citizens' Councils, Clubs, Centres and Organizations.*
- Complete the *Seniors' Housing Directory.*

Priority 4.3 Operate the Information Resource Centre
To support evidence-based decision making and ensure Secretariat staff, committee members, seniors, government departments and others with an interest in aging have access to the latest resources on aging, the Information Resource Centre will be maintained. This is an ongoing initiative. The following milestones will be achieved by March 31st, 2006:

- Identify the strategic information needs of the Secretariat and its government and community-based partners and tailor the services provided by the Information Resource Centre to meet those needs.

Priority 4.4 Strengthen Communications
To ensure consistent messaging and information sharing to seniors, stakeholders, and the general public, the Secretariat will take stock of its current internal and external communications activities, get feedback from seniors on what is working and what can be improved, and implement identified changes. This is an ongoing initiative. The following milestones will be achieved by March 31st, 2006:

- Develop and implement the Secretariat's communication strategy.
- Update and revamp the Secretariat's corporate identity.
- Hold focus group meetings with stakeholders to review current publications and website to examine what is working and what can be improved.

I. BUDGET CONTEXT

The Department of Health carries out finance, human resources, and information technology functions on behalf of the Secretariat. This enables the Secretariat to function with minimal expenditure for administrative overhead. It also provides the Secretariat with funding for a part-time Communications Advisor.

The Secretariat, as lead agency for the Task Force on Aging and Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy, is entering into Year 2 of these initiatives. In recognition of the funding requirements for this ongoing work and the importance of its other priorities, the Secretariat's budget has seen an increase in 2005-2006.

Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat
Estimated Budget Expenditures by Core Business

Core Business Area	*2004-2005*	*Forecast 2004-2005*	*2005-2006*
	$000's	*$000's*	*$000's*
Core Business 1 Intra-Government and Inter-Departmental Collaboration	27,700	24,700	28,700
Core Business 2 Policy Development and Consultation	152,400	146,500	147,400
Core Business 3 Planning and Coordinating Programs and Services for Seniors	107,000	102,000	216,000
Core Business 4 Information and Education	58,000	49,000	58,000
Administration and Support	48,000	42,000	63,900
Total - Gross Current	393,100	364,200	514,000
Total - Program Expenses net of Recoveries	393,100	364,200	514,000
Salaries and Benefits	378,900	386,800	465,000
Total Budget	*772,000*	*751,000*	*979,000*
Funded Staff (FTEs)	6	6	7

J. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Secretariat's formal performance measurement system will be implemented in 2005-2006, instead of in 2004- 2005, as originally planned. In 2005-2006, important baseline information will be established for each of the performance measures identified. This information will help the Secretariat set future performance targets.

The performance measures identified for 2005-2006 will provide useful information about the Secretariat's work. Over time, new measures will be developed and current ones improved, as the Secretariat strives to continuously improve its performance.

Core Business 2: Policy Development and Consultation				
Outcome (immediate or intermediate)	**MEASURE**	**DATA**	**TARGET**	**Strategic Actions to Achieve Target**
Consultation with Seniors: Seniors have opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues.	Satisfaction level of Nova Scotia's seniors' organizations with the information provided by the Senior Citizens' Secretariat about the policies, programs, and services available to seniors in Nova Scotia and with the mechanisms in place for bringing issues of concern to the attention of the Nova Scotia government.	Baseline will be established in 2005-2006.	High level of overall satisfaction	Hold regular meetings with the Group of IX Nova Scotia Seniors' Organizations. Organize regular consultations with seniors organizations. Monitor the Secretariat's Seniors' Information Line and tracking the issues of concern raised by callers. Update the Ministers of the Secretariat on emerging issues identified by seniors. Forward recommendations and advice received from seniors on the policies, programs, and services available to seniors in Nova Scotia to appropriate government departments.

Core Business 4: Information and Education

Outcome (immediate or intermediate)	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET	Strategic Actions to Achieve Target
Strengthened External Communications: Information on programs and services for seniors is communicated in a senior-friendly format.	Survey questions and focus groups will be used to ask a sample of seniors and individuals who work with seniors to assess current communications vehicles (quarterly newsletter, *Programs for Seniors* directory, and website on characteristics such as: suitability of contents, comprehensiveness, readability, layout, and design. Additionally, survey participants will be given a set period of time to locate specific information in the directory. Their success rate for this task will be documented.	Baseline will be established in 2005-2006.	High level of overall satisfaction Target for finding information will be established once the baseline is set	*Programs for Seniors:* Maintain contact with seniors' networks in Nova Scotia to ensure the directory is inclusive and comprehensive. Determine content and format of directory. Set up a relevant editorial board to assist in planning and organization of the publication. Update information annually and add information on new programs and services. Apply best practices for readability. *Newsletter:* Improve readability Improve layout Reduce per-unit production costs. *Website:* Apply new corporate identity. Update per feedback from stakeholders.

Core Business 4: Information and Education				
Outcome (immediate or intermediate)	**MEASURE**	**DATA**	**TARGET**	**Strategic Actions to Achieve Target**
Strengthened External Communications: Seniors and their families utilize the telephone-based information service provided by the Secretariat.	The number and type of calls received on the Secretariat's toll-free seniors information line will be monitored. Issues will be tracked, reported, and analyzed monthly to measure increases in activity in response to special promotions.	Baseline will be established in 2005-2006	Monthly data collection and annual report of activity.	Revise current data collection instrument to be more user-friendly. Maintain statistics on the Secretariat's shared drive (computer-based).